

NORWAY IN OLD NORSE LITERATURE: SOME CONSIDERATIONS ON THE SPECIFIC CHARACTER OF SCANDINAVIAN SPATIAL ORIENTATION

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The present paper deals with (1) the reflected in Old Norse literature location, extent and boundaries of Norway, as well as its place in the known world; (2) the name of the country that is closely connected with its geographical location; (3) spatial ideas of medieval Norwegians. The aim of our study is to examine both the specific, from the point of view of spatial orientation, character of the Old Scandinavian world-picture and its similarity with spatial conceptions in other archaic cultures of the world.

(1)

The earliest description of the geographical location of Norway and the earliest record of the names of the country and its inhabitants can be found in Olthere's account of his voyage from Halogaland north to the land of *beornas* written down ca. 890 by the Anglo-Saxon King Alfred in his translation of the *Seven Books of History against the Pagans (Historiarum adversum Paganos Libri Septem)* by Orosius [1]¹. Descriptions of Norway occur in several works of Old Norse (Icelandic-Norwegian) literature, chronicles, sagas and geographical treatises. To name the main sources we should mention [2] the Norwegian chronicle written in Latin *Historia Norvegiæ* (ca. 1170); [3] the Icelandic geographical treatise of the late twelfth century (AM 194, 8^o; 736 I, 4^o) and two treatises originating from it, i.e. [4] the one of the mid-thirteenth century (AM 764, 4^o) and [5] *Gripla*, a description of Greenland, no later than the fourteenth century (AM 115, 8^o); [6] *Ólafs saga Tryggvasonar* by Oddr Snorrason (ca. 1190); [7] the so-called *Legendary Saga of St. Olaf* of the early thirteenth century; the great compendia of the Norwegian kings [8] *Fagrskinna* (ca. 1220) and [9] Snorri Sturluson's *Heimskringla* (ca. 1230); [10] the *Flateyjarbók* version of the *Separate Saga of St. Olaf*; [11] *Egils saga Skallagrímssonar* which is supposed to have been written by Snorri Sturluson somewhere between 1200 and 1230. A very similar picture is found in the Danish chronicle of the early thirteenth century *Gesta Danorum* by Saxo Grammaticus [12].

As one can see from the texts each author has a general idea of the world and he finds his way in it with the help of the so-called *mental map*. It is quite evident that the authors of the eleventh through the thirteenth centuries hardly had in front of their eyes any real maps that would help them to define the correlation of lands and would be useful in writing their descriptions of countries and peoples. However, they were permanently compiling, out of different data of a *chorographical* character, *mental maps* of the corresponding localities. This happens, for instance, with Saxo Grammaticus [12] who knows about the existence of the northern bend of the Ocean (*Gandvikr*) and the southern bend of it (the Baltic) and thus comes to the conclusion that Sweden and Norway are not situated on an island but on a peninsula. The process of deduction (cf. in the text: *igitur, quod nisi*) reveals the lack of a reliable map. But it also shows us the immediate, as if taking place in our presence, creation of a mental map. We are prone to think that the texts under discussion reflect a transitional type of orientation, a period when the *chorographical* orientation in space, with its linear, dimensional coordinates of an *itinerary map*, was substituted by a, yet mental, *view-map*, by a *cartographical* orientation. The latter is characterized by the absence of concrete sensual perception of space, by a greater degree of disengagement from local points in the process of examination of terrestrial objects, by a simultaneous vision of different spatial components².

To speak about the extent and boundaries of Norway as they are depicted in the discussed sources we should mention that all the texts [1–12] present Norway as a land stretching in the *northerly* direction, even going 'very far north' [1]. And further north the cultivated land goes the narrower it becomes, being only three miles wide in its northern part [1]. Among the northern bounds of Norway *Finnmørk* [3a, 3b, 4, 5, 6a, 6b, 9, 11], *Gandvíkr* [3a, 8, 10] and *Vegistafr/Egistafr* [2, 3a, 7] are named. *Finnmørk* (= *Finnish Marches*) is a land where Finns (Lapps) used to live. Today it is part of Norway (Finnmarken), but in medieval texts it is called both the northernmost Norwegian territory and a neighboring land in the far north [6a]. The reason for such ambiguity might lie in the absence of constant borders and the joint settlement of Lappish and Norwegian population (cp. in *Historia Norvegiæ* even about Halogaland: its inhabitants live mostly together with Finns and are engaged in commerce with them [2]). The name *Gandvíkr* is used in Old Norse texts for the designation of a big bend of the Ocean, *sinus septentrionalis*, i.e. the waters of the Arctic ocean to the north of Norway and Finnmarken. As far as *Vegistafr/Egistafr* (literally: *sea staff*) is concerned the localization of this region in the north of Halogaland, close to *Finnmørk* and *Bjarmaland*, is uncertain.

The sources are not unanimous as far as that part of Norway which is opposite to the northern one is concerned. We can read about southwest [6a], south [3a, 6b, 10] and east [3a, 7, 8, 9]. In two texts, not without reason, it is said that Norway is outstretched in three (not in two) directions: 'In the east it starts with the big river <...>, stretches towards the west and then, in a curved line, reaches the north and returns back [to the east]' [2]; 'Norway has three promontories; that land goes far from the southeast towards the north and from the *Gautelfr* (Göta River) towards the north up till *Vegistafr*; and in width it stretches from the east to the west, from the *Eidaskógr* (Eid Forest) to the *Englandssjór* (North Sea)' [6a]. However, one can imagine Norway as a triangle with apexes in the north, east and south (or west) already after reading Ohthere's text [1]: 'The cultivated land is broadest towards the east, and the further north it goes the narrower it becomes. Towards the east it is perhaps sixty miles broad or somewhat broader; and in the middle, thirty or broader; and to the north, he said, where it is narrowest, it might be three miles across to the mountains'.

Norwegian boundaries, if they are described, are named only in the north and in the east (or south). The western border that is formed by the sea is never mentioned in this context. Thus, we see that only those boundaries that go by land and often happen to become a point of controversy in international relations are mentioned in our texts. As far as the eastern border with Sweden is concerned, the texts show that it goes all the way along the mountains and the forests, with the exception of the southernmost part that is formed by the *Gautelfr* [9]. Some of the texts, nevertheless [3a, 10], call this river Norwegian southern border, and in this case the eastern one is the Eid Forest.

Several texts mention the waters near the western coast of Norway: *Englandssjór* (the North Sea) [6a, 6b] and the *Aungulseyarsund* (the Anglesey Straits by Lofoten Islands) [3a]. It is worth noting that in the text of the geographical treatise the eastern point is given at the latitude of about sixty degrees (*Eidaskógr*) while the western one is somewhere near the sixty eighth degree (*Aungulseyarsund*). There is also another thing to mention, i.e. the fact that the big firth at the same latitude bears the name of *Vestfjorden*.

The same texts can give us a general idea of the position that Norway occupied in the medieval Scandinavian world-picture. Such countries as *Sviþjóð* [2, 3a, 4, 5, 6a, 6b, 12] and *Rusaland* [4] are described as lying to the east of Norway, *England* [6a] and *Ísland* [12] are to the west, *Danmørk* [3a, 4, 5, 6a, 6b] and *Saxland* [3a] are to the south, while *Finnmørk* [3a, 3b, 4, 5, 6a, 6b, 9, 11] lies to the north, and *Bjarmaland* to the north, or northeast, or east northeast, of the latter one [2, 3b, 4, 5]. This picture is not complete, although it is right in its main features. However, we shall return to this subject somewhat later.

No matter how large the amount of information included in the twelve above mentioned texts is, the main impression one may receive from the descriptions of Norway found in the works of Old Norse literature is that medieval Scandinavians saw Norway as a strip land stretched out in the northern direction⁵.

(2) ...

One gets the same information if he looks at the name of the country, since the Old Icelandic *Nóregr* comes from **Norðvegr* (with [d] and [w]) — *the way towards the north* (cf.: Old English *Norðweg* [Ohthere]; Latin *Norðve(g)ia* [Adam of Bremen], *Norwegia* [in *Historia Norvegiae*], *Norvagia* [Saxo]; modern Icelandic *Noregur*, Norwegian *Noreg*, Swedish, Danish *Norge*, English *Norway*, German *Nordwegen*). The origin of the name seems to be doubtless (cardinal point + way), though there exist different explanations. Thus, Richard Cleasby and Gudbrandr Vigfusson⁴, as well as Jan de Vries², being the proponents of the first interpretation, point out that another derivation, from *nór* = *a sea loch*, is possible and that it is supported by the pronunciation, i.e. by the length of [ó]⁶ and by the absence of [d]⁷, but also by the shape of the country, as Norway is a narrow strip of land between sea and mountains, with many fjords. In this case, according to Vries, the medieval Latin *Northwegia* should be considered as a popular etymology⁸. We want to stress, however, that there existed an Old English form of the late tenth century *Norðweg* [Ohthere], as well as the, parallel to *Nóregr*, Old Icelandic name of the inhabitants of this country, *Norðmenn* (plural from *Norðmaðr*, with [d] in both of them⁹).

There is still another argument to support the derivation from *norðr*. Old Norse sources have preserved other place-names of the type 'cardinal point + *vegr* / *vegir* (*vegar*)'. *Austrvegr* is often used, both in the singular and in the plural, while three other terms are rarely used, mostly in early texts and only in the plural form: *Vesturvegir* on a Swedish rune stone, *Suðurvegar* in *Guðrunar-kviða*, *Fóstbraðra saga* and *Ólafs saga Tryggvasonar* by Oddr Snorrason, *Norðurvegar* in *Helga-kviða Hundingsbana*¹⁰. These names could have served as designations of numerous definite routes in the eastern, western, southern and northern directions.

Thus, we see that medieval Scandinavians knew four ways named after four cardinal directions. And the question naturally arises: where did the starting point of all these ways lie? Where was the center of this, so to say, *wind-rose* situated? This could hardly have been Norway, from the North Sea and the Skagerrack in the south to Finnmarken in the north, because the country itself was understood as one of those ways, the way towards the north. It is evident that the original names of the country and of its inhabitants, **Norðvegr* and *Norðmenn*, could not have been autochthonous (no peoples can call themselves *northern* or *southern*). The name had to have originated to the south of Norway, somewhere in the north of Continental Europe (north of Jutland?), or in the northern part of Danish islands, or in the south of Scandinavia. And it could have happened long before the discussed sources were written down.

It is a well known fact that the main area of Germanic settlements in Scandinavia in ancient times was in the south of it (island *Scadinavia*, or *Scania*, or *Scanza*, or *Scandia*), as well as the northern part of Jutland and Sjælland. Herefrom, mostly along the coast, Germanic tribes advanced slowly and in small groups to the north of Scandinavia, moving along the **Norðvegr*¹¹. Norway is likely to have received its name in the late fourth century A.D., as this was the period when, according to archaeological data, new groups of Germanic tribes (those, at least, that gave names to provinces *Hordaland* and *Rogaland*) migrated from the continent to the northwest coast of Norway. The easiest route to the Scandinavian peninsula led through the

Danish islands and straits. This particular region, the center of trade communications of Northern Europe¹², could have been a birthplace of a specific *wind-rose* that reflected the existence of sea routes leading to the east (the Baltic) and to the west (the North Sea, the Atlantic Ocean), and of land routes through Denmark and *Saxland* in the south and through Norway in the north.

There are all reasons to think that in time the root *veg-* in the above mentioned composites lost its main meaning and that place-names ending in *-vegr* became a designation of lands, but not of routes. *Austrvegr* turned into the name of Baltic lands; *Nóregr* started being used as a name of the country, Norway. In its new phonetic shape, *Nóregr* instead of **Norðvegr*, it might have no longer been understood as *the way towards the north*¹³. The name turned gradually into a self-denomination with vague etymology, what is proved at least by the medieval attempts to explain it from a legendary king *Nór*¹⁴.

Still more place-names are connected with cardinal points and a corresponding subdivision of the surrounding world. These are composites ending in *-lond* (*Austrlond*, *Vestrilond*, *Súðrilond* and *Norðrilond*), *-ríki* (*Súðrríki* and *Austrríki*), *-hálf* (*Austrhálf*, *Vestr(h)álf*, *Súðr(h)álf* and *Norðr(h)álf*)¹⁵.

Thus, from the analysis of place-names we can see that medieval Scandinavians imagined the inhabited (or visited by them) world as consisting of four segments in accordance with four cardinal points. This conclusion does not contradict the well known fact that in several works of Old Norse literature the earth (*ocumena*) is divided into three parts (see the introductory phrases of geographical treatises, the beginning of *Ynglinga saga*, the *Prologue* to Snorri's *Edda* and some others). The division of the *ocumena* into three 'parts' of Noah's sons, Sem, Cham and Japhet, associated with ancient subdivision of land into three continents, Asia, Europe and Africa, became traditional in medieval Latin cosmography of Europe. In those cases when a Scandinavian author wrote a 'learned' introduction to his work within the frames of this tradition the world was divided by him into three parts¹⁶. On the contrary, in describing concrete geographical objects, distant voyages, sea routes, in practical orientation Scandinavians put to use the idea, traditional for them as well as for other Germanic and even Indo-European peoples, of the world divided into four segments according to four cardinal points.

(3)

Exactly the same results, namely that medieval Icelanders and Norwegians imagined the inhabited world as a sum of four quarters, one can receive analyzing a different, though similar, material, i.e. descriptions of voyages from Norway to faraway countries preserved in Icelandic Kings' Sagas. Here we come across paradoxical at first sight stories about sailing from Norway west to Africa, from England west to France; from *Bjarmaland* (on the White Sea) east to the region of Suzdal' and therefrom east to the region of Novgorod (in Ancient Rus); etc. Directions of all these trips mentioned by saga authors are often opposite to the compass data and they look as if incorrect.

To understand the problem one should pay attention to the discussions of specifically Icelandic orientation, i.e. the semantics of orientation with regard to Iceland, as reflected in the Icelandic Family Sagas¹⁷. As it follows from the analysis of the *Íslendingasögur*, terms of cardinal direction were not monosemantic in Iceland: their meaning depended on the context in which they were used. Directions expressed by them could either correspond or not correspond to the compass. This means that the terms of direction could be used by Icelanders both in 'correct' (better to say, 'approximately correct') and the 'incorrect' meanings.

Finnur Haugen¹⁸ distinguished two types of orientation in space. He called them 'proximate' and 'ultimate'. 'Proximate' orientation is the one that is based on visual experience, both in the vicinity and in the open sea, where celestial observation is the only possible way of

defining one's location and of finding one's way. Cardinal terms are used in this case 'correctly'. 'Ultimate' orientation in geographical space developed in land travel and in coastal navigation between the four Quarters (*fjórðungar*) that Iceland was divided into in 965 and which were called after the four cardinal directions. Going 'west' (from any geographical point within Iceland) meant movement towards the Western Quarter, going 'north' towards the northern part of Iceland, and so on. The 'ultimate' system is the one where directions are described in terms of a goal (each Quarter being a goal). Accordingly, cardinal terms are used here 'incorrectly'.

The analysis of the material of Icelandic Kings' sagas¹⁹ has shown that the world-picture reflected by *Komungusögur* consists of four segments: the northern, the western, the eastern and the southern. The set of lands in each segment is quite permanent. The western quarter includes all the Atlantic lands such as England, Iceland, the Orkney Islands, France, Spain and even Africa. The eastern lands are the Baltic lands and the territories far beyond the Baltic sea such as Russia. The southern lands are Denmark and *Saxland*. The northern quarter is formed by Norway itself, but also by *Finnmark* and, sometimes, by *Bjarmaland*²⁰. The movement from one segment into another is defined not according to the compass points, but according to the accepted naming of these segments. This means that spatial orientation is described in terms of a goal. Thus, when somebody goes from Sweden, or from the Baltic lands, or from Russia to Norway he is said either to go *norðr* because Norway belongs to the 'Northern segment', or to go *austan* because Sweden, the Baltics and Russia belong to the 'Eastern segment'.

It is worth noting that the distribution of lands within the quarters revealed in Icelandic Kings' sagas closely corresponds to the one that we singled out of a sum of texts describing the geographical location of Norway. The Kings' sagas, in their turn, reflect the same orientational system as the Icelandic Family sagas: in ultimate orientation cardinal points are used in respect to quarters (parts, segments) of the world, but not to linear directions.

The center of the *wind-rose*, as we are prone to think, was somewhere in the south of the Scandinavian peninsula, or on Northern Jutland, or in the north of Danish islands. However, the fact that Denmark was thought to belong to the southern part of the world needs to be commented upon. It is likely that one should pay more attention to the subdivision into the South- and the North-Danes which is mentioned in some medieval sources. Thus, according to king Alfred, the South-Danes inhabited the Jutland peninsula, while the North-Danes lived on the islands (Fyn, Sjælland) and on Scandinavian mainland²¹. *Knytinga saga* says that Denmark is a big country and lies much to the south (*mjök sundrlaust*); the largest part of Denmark is called Jutland (*Jóland*) and it lies by the sea, more to the south (*et syðra*) than other parts of Denmark²². Herefrom follows that the center of the *wind-rose* could in fact have been in the area populated by the North-Danes. In respect to this point Jutland could have been understood as a territory situated to the south, while Norway remained in the Northern segment and, in agreement with its name, formed, together with Finnmarken, one of the four quarters.

The four-partial world-picture of medieval Scandinavians finds its reflection in the, stated by historians, division of countries, towns, provinces, regions in the Germanic North, and the earth itself into four quarters²³. As it has been found out, in numerous magic ceremonies a man had to face this or that cardinal point²⁴. The specific value of the four terms of direction is reflected in Germanic folklore and popular traditions.

According to Norse mythology, Bor's sons killed the giant Ymir, transported him to the middle of Ginnungagap, and out of him they made the earth. They also took his skull and made out of it the sky and set it up over the earth with four points, and under each corner they set a dwarf. Their names are Austri, Vestri, Norðri, Sudri²⁵. The text clearly indicates that for medieval Scandinavians the creation of the world out of an anthropomorphic body, typical for different ancient cultures of Eurasia²⁶, was inseparably linked with orientation on cardinal points. This might serve as an evidence of a specific keenness of this culture on spatial orientation in general.

It is very important to notice that the archaic consciousness in practically all cultures of the world is characterized by a natural archetype of spatial division into four parts oriented, as a rule, on cardinal points²⁷. It is well known that such wide spread over the earth cosmological symbols as cross, swastika, square, four-petal lotus, etc. reflect this very structure of cosmic and terrestrial space. Such is, for instance, the world-picture of ancient Celts, Indians, Chinese and other peoples.

To prove the above said we can remind how the world was structured in two, distant from one another, Indo-European cultures, Celtic and Indian. Modern Ireland consists of four provinces, but the term for this administrative division, *cyiced*, with the meaning of *one fifth*, shows that earlier there were five of them. Except the four provinces lying in the direction of cardinal points (legendary tradition names *Ulaid*, or *Ulster*, in the north, *Leinster* in the east, *Munster* in the south and *Konnacht* in the west) there appeared in the second century A.D. the fifth province in the central part of the island which was called *Mide*, i.e. *Middle*²⁸.

Cosmological schemes of ancient Indians represent the earth as four continents (islands) situated round the sacred mountain *Meru*, the holy center of the universe. Since the mythical mountain is supposed by Indians to be in the far north, India occupies in this scheme only one continent, the southern one, but not the center. From the point of view of ancient Indians, north was sacred, which was natural, as the Aryans had come to India from the north. Correspondingly, the participants of many magic ceremonies had to face this sacred, northern, side of the horizon, while the kingdom of the dead ruled by god *Jama* was just in the opposite side of the world, in the south.

Similar situation, only with opposite directions, one could encounter in Norway: the sacred side of the horizon was the south wherefrom the Scandinavian peninsula had been inhabited, the kingdom of the dead was in the north, the earth consisted of four segments, and Norway itself was not the center of the universe, but only part of its northern quarter. However, when a saga author looked at the surrounding world from Norway that territory could sometimes acquire the meaning of a real center.

In order to understand how medieval Scandinavian world-picture was formed and how Norway came to occupy its place on the mental map we might probably reconstruct the process as follows. Division of space, of the universe, of the inhabited world into four parts was archetypal for all the peoples in the world, since it was inherent in the psychosomatic features of a man that could make distinctions between *in front* and *behind*, *to the right* and *to the left*. This peculiarity of human consciousness is supported and supplemented by the movement of the Sun that provides four points of orientation, i.e. four cardinal points. In the first centuries A.D. this four-partial structure of geographical space found its realization among the Northern Germans somewhere in the area of Southern Scandinavia and Danish islands. It acquired a form of the four-petal *wind-rose* of four *vegar*. The northern *vegr* (>*Nóregr*) served as a designation of migration of Germanic tribes to the north of Scandinavian peninsula. In the ninth century this idea of a four-partial world came to Iceland, brought there by those Norwegians who settled the island, and served as a basis for the subdivision of Iceland into four Quarters²⁹. Creating their sagas of Norwegian Kings Icelanders used the traditional for all Scandinavians scheme of world division into four quarters with the center in Southern Scandinavia, and this was supported as well by their own Icelandic practice.

NOTES

¹ See the texts in the Supplement.

² For more information about the primary, *chorographical* or *hodological*, and the secondary, *cartographical*, systems of orientation in archaic cultures see: Podossinov, A.V. Cartographical Principle in the Structure of Geographical Descriptions of Ancient Times (Statement of a Problem). In: Metodika izuchenija drevnejshih istochnikov po istorii narodov SSSR. Moscow, 1978, p. 22-45 (in Russian); Janni, P. La mappa e il periplo: Cartografia antica e spazio odologico. Roma, 1984.

³ While in fact the main part of the Norwegian coastline runs directly from southwest to northeast, this medieval idea of its extent from south to north has served as one of the arguments for the theory of 'shifted orientation' which states that the Old Norse terms of direction exhibit the shift of 45 or 60 degrees clockwise and that their north was really close to northeast, east to southeast, etc. (A review of literature see: Jackson, T.N. To the Question of Medieval Scandinavian System of Orientation. In: Srednie veka. Moscow, vol. 60, in Russian).

⁴ Cleasby, R. & Gudbrandr Vigfusson. An Icelandic-English Dictionary. Oxford, 1957, p. 457.

⁵ Vries, J. de. Altnordisches etymologisches Wörterbuch. 2-te Aufl. Leiden, 1977, S. 411-412.

⁶ That the word was sounded with a long vowel is seen from skaldic poetry of the late tenth to early eleventh centuries (see: Cleasby & Gudbrandr Vigfusson. Op. cit., p. 457).

⁷ J. de Vries points that [d] is missing already in a runic inscription ca. 950 from Jellinge — *nuruak* (Op. cit., S. 411-412).

⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁹ However, *Nordmenn* can serve as a designation of all Scandinavian peoples, but not only Norwegians (see: Metzenthin E.M. Die Länder- und Völkernamen im altisländischen Schrifttum. Pennsylvania, 1941, S. 75). Cf. the *Nordmanni* of Einhardt, early ninth century, that are used for *Dani* and *Susones* (Vita Karoli, XII, 3; XIV, 1).

¹⁰ Metzenthin. Op. cit., S. 9, 73; Cleasby & Gudbrandr Vigfusson. Op. cit., p. 36, 457, 603, 700.

¹¹ Neolithic (beginning with the middle of the third millennium B.C.) population corresponding to the Battle-Axe archaeological culture is today regarded as Germanic.

¹² For instance, archaeologists have revealed the existence at the beginning of the first millennium B.C. of economic centers that served as focal points of trade for Northern and Central Europe in the area of Voldtofte on Fyn and the area of Boalund on Sjælland (see: Thrane, H. Lusehøj ved Voldtofte. In: Fynske minder. 1976, s. 17-32; Jensen, J. Et rigdomscenter fra yngre bronzealder på Sjælland. In: Aarbøger for nordisk oldkyndighed og historie. 1981, s. 48-96).

¹³ However, the West Germanic languages preserved the second root in its initial meaning (cf. the Old English *Nordweg*, English *Norway*, German *Norwegen*).

¹⁴ See the patronymic legend in *Historia Norvegiae*, in *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* by Oddr Snorrason, in the initial chapters of *Orkneyinga saga*, in *Hversu Noregr byggðisk*.

¹⁵ Metzenthin. Op. cit., S. 8-9, 76, 117; Cleasby & Gudbrandr Vigfusson. Op. cit., p. 35, 457, 603, 700.

¹⁶ See: Brincken, A.D. von den. Fines Terrae: Die Enden der Erde und der vierte Kontinent auf mittelalterlichen Weltkarten. Hannover, 1992, S. 179-182. Cf.: Melnikova, E.A. Drevneskandinavskie geograficheskie sochinienija. Teksty, perevod, kommentarij. Moscow, 1986, p. 31-32, 72-89 (in Russian); Jackson, T.N. Icelandic Kings' Sagas as a Source for the History of Ancient Rus and its Neighbours. 10th-13th Centuries. In.: Drevnejšie gosudarstva na territorii SSSR. 1988-1989. Moscow, 1991, p. 109-117 (in Russian).

¹⁷ Stefán Einarsson. Terms of Direction in Modern Icelandic. In: Scandinavian Studies Presented to George T. Flom. Urbana, Ill., 1942, p. 37-48; Idem. Terms of Direction in Old Icelandic. In: The Journal of English and Germanic Philology. Vol. 43. Urbana, Ill., 1944, p. 265-285; Haugen, E. The Semantics of Icelandic Orientation. In: Word, vol. XIII, N 3 (1957), p. 447-459; Hastrup, K. Culture and History in Medieval Iceland: An Anthropological Analysis of Structure and Change. Oxford, 1985, p. 50-69.

¹⁸ Haugen, Op. cit.

¹⁹ See: Jackson, T. Orientational Principles of Organization of Space in the *Weltmodell* of a Medieval Scandinavian. In: *Odyseus. Chelovek v istorii*. 1994. Moscow, 1995, p. 54-64 (in Russian).

²⁰ *Bjarmaland* occupies a position somewhere on the borderline of northern and eastern quarters: it belongs to the eastern lands but to get there one has to undertake a trip in the northern direction.

²¹ *Two Voyagers*, p. 16-18.

²² *Knýtlinga saga*. In: *Sögur Danakonunga*. Udg. af C. af Petersen og E. Olson. (SUGNL. B. XLVL) København, 1919-1925, s. 79.

²³ See: Müller, W. Kreis und Kreuz: Untersuchungen zur sakralen Siedlung bei Italikern und Germanen. Berlin, 1938, S. 73.

²⁴ See: Stegemann, V. Himmelsrichtungen. In: *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens*. 4. Bd. Berlin, Leipzig, 1931/1932, S. 32-34.

²⁵ Snorri Sturluson. *Edda*. New complete translation by Anthony Faulkes. London, 1987, p. 12.

²⁶ Cf.: Chinese *Pan'gu* and Indian *Purusha*.

²⁷ Often this four-partial structure is supplemented by the fifth component, i.e. the center, the very existence of which reflects a sacred social, political and ethnic egocentrism typical for many peoples.

²⁸ See: Mac Neill, E. *Phases of Irish History*. Dublin, 1919, p. 100; Rees, A. & Rees, B. *Celtic Heritage. Ancient Tradition in Ireland and Wales*. London, 1961, p. 23-26, 147-148. T.F. O'Rahilly doubts the historicity of the 'five kingdoms' (*Early Irish History and Mythology*. Dublin, 1971, p. 171-183).

²⁹ Cf. with the Celts of Ireland who, dividing their island into four kingdoms, applied to the immediate surroundings their idea of spatial structure of the whole world.

SUPPLEMENT

[1]. *Ohthere's account of his voyage recorded by King Alfred in his translation of «Historiarum adversum Paganos Libri Septem» by Paulus Orosius (Two Voyagers at the Court of King Alfred. Ed. by Niels Lund. York, 1984, p. 18-21):*

Ohthere sæde his hlaforde, Ælfrède cynings, þæt he ealra Nordmonna norþmest bude. He cwæð þæt he bude on þæm lande norþweardum wip þa Westsæ. He sæde þeah þæt þæt land sie swiþe lang norþ þonan, ac hit is eal weste, buton on feawum stowum styccemælum wiciad Finnas, on huntode on wintra & on sumra on fiscap be þære sæ.

He sæde þæt he æt sumum cirre wolde fandian hu longe þæt land norþryhte læge, opþe hwæder ænig mon be nordan dæm westenne bude. Þa for he nopryhte be þæm lande; let him ealne weg þæt weste land on dæt steorbord & þa widsæ onn dæt bæcbord þrie dagas. Þa was he swa feor norþ swa þa hwælhuntian firrest farap. Þa for he þa giet norþryhte swa feor swa he meahte on þæm oþrum þrim dagum gesiglan. Þa heag þæt land þær eastryhte, opþe seo sæ in on dæt lond, he nyssæ hwæder, buton he wisse dæt he dær bad westanwindes

& hwon norþan & siglde ða east be lande swa swa he mehte on feower dagum gesiglan. Ða sceolde he ðær bidan ryhtnorþanwines, for ðæm þæt land beag þær sudryhte, oþþe seo see in on ðæt land, he nysse hwæþer. Ða siglde he þonan sudryhte be lande swa swa he mehte on fif dagum gesiglan. Ða læg þær an micel ea up in on þæt land. [...]

He sæde þæt Nordmanna land wære swyþe lang & swyde smæl. Eal þæt his man aþer odde ettan odde erian mæg, þæt lid wið ða sæ; & þæt is þeah on sunnum stowum swyde cludig, & ligað wilde moras wið eastan & wið uppon, emmlange þæm bynum lande. On þæm morum earriad Finnas: & þæt byne land is easteward bradost & symle swa nordor swa smære; eastewerd hit mæg bion syxtig mila brad oþþe hwene brædre, & middeward þritig odde bradre; & nordeward, he cwæð, þær hit smælost wære, þæt hit mihte beon þreora mila brad to þæm more, & se mor syðþan on sunnum stowum swa brad swa man mæg on twam wucum oferferan, & on sunnum stowum swa brad swa man mæg on syx dagum oferferan.

[2]. «*Historia Norwegiæ*» (*Monumenta historica Norwegiæ. Latinske kildeskrifter til Norges historie i middelalderen. Udg. ved G. Storm. Kristiania, 1880, p. 73–78*).

Incipit liber primus in historia Norwegiæ.

Norwegia igitur a quodam rege, qui Nor nuncupatus est, nomen obtinuerat. Est autem Norwegia regio vastissima sed maxima ex parte inhabitabilis præ nimietate montium et nemorum ac frigorum. Quæ in oriente a magno flumine incipit, versus occidentem uero uergit et sic circumflexo sine per aquilonem regyral. Est terra nimis sinuosa, innumera protendens promontoria, iii habitabilibus zonis per longum cincta: prima, quæ maxima et maritima est; secunda mediterranea, quæ et montana dicitur; tertia siluestris, quæ Finnis inhabitatur, sed non aratur. Circumsepta quidem ex occasu et aquilone refluente oceanii, a meridie uero Daciam et Balticum mare habet, sed de sole Swethiam, Gantoniam, Angariam, Jantoniam. Quas nunc partes (deo gratias) gentes colunt christianæ. Versus uero septemtrionem gentes per plures paganismum (proh dolor) inservientes trans Norwegiam ab oriente extenduntur, scilicet Kariali et Kwæni, cornuti Finni ac utriusque Biarmones. Sed quæ gentes post istos habitent, nihil certum habemus. Quidam tamen nautæ cum de Glaciali insula ad Norwegiam remeare studuissent et a contrariis uentorum turbinibus in brumalem plagam propulsi essent, inter Viridenses et Biarmones tandem applicuerunt, ubi homines miræ magnitudinis et virginum terram (quæ gustu aquæ concipere dicuntur) se reperisse protestati sunt. Ab istis uero Viridis terra congelatis scopulis dirimitur; quæ patria a Tolensibus reperta et inhabitata oc fide catholica roborata terminus est ad occasum Europæ, fere contingens Africanas insulas, ubi inundant oceanii refluente. Trans Viridenses ad aquilonem quidam homunciones a uenatoribus reperiuntur, quos Scærlinga appellant; qui dum uivi armis feruntur, vulnera eorum absque cruore albescunt, mortuis uero uix cessat sanguis manare. Sed ferri metallo penitus carent, dentibus cetinis pro missilibus, saxis acutis pro cultris utuntur.

De tripartito incolatu Norwegiæ.

Zona itaque maritima Decapolis dici potest, nam x ciuitatibus inclitya est, iiii patrias complectens xxii provinciarum capaces. Prima patria Sinus orientalis dicitur, a terminis Daciæ oriens, et usque ad locum, qui Rygiarbit appellatur, extenditur iiii provincias continens. Secunda Gulacia ad insulam, quæ Media nuncupatur, usque propelatur vi complectens provincias, quarum ultima nomine Mor uillam quandam habet naturæ mirabilis; omnes enim stipites arborumque abscisi ramusculi, si per unius anni spatium terræ inhaerant, in lapides convertuntur. Tertia patria Trondemia uocatur et est sinus ostio angustissimo, octo capiens provincias in sua latissima receptacula, iii etiam extra sumens et frunt xi. Quarta Halogia, cuius incolæ multum Finnis cohabitant et inter se commercia frequentant; quæ patria in aquilonem terminat Norwegiam iuxta locum Wgcstaf, qui Biarmoniam ab ea dirimit.

[3a-b]. *The Icelandic geographical treatise of the late twelfth century*, AM 194, 8^o, 736 I, 4^o («Alfræði Íslenskr», *Íslandsk encyclopædisk litteratur*. København, 1908, b. I, udg. ved Kr.Kálund, s. 11).

[3a] AM 194, 8^o:

Fyrir nordan Saxland er Danmörk. I gegnum Danmörk gengr síor i austr-veg. Svíþjóð liggir fyrir austan Danmörk, en Noregr fyrir nordan. **Noregr er kallaðr nordan fra Veggistaf, þar er Finnörk, þat er hia Gandvik, ok suðr til Gaut-elfar. Þesa rikis ero endimörk: Gandvik fyrir nordan, en Gaut-elfr fyrir sunnan, Eida-skogr fyrir austan, en Aunguls-cyiar-sund fyrir vestan**.

[3b] — AM 736 I, 4^o instead of *** ** reads as follows:

Fyrir nordan Noregr er Finnörk. Þaðan vikr landi til lannorþus oc sva til austrs aðr komi til Biarma-landz, þat er scatt-gillt undir Gardá-konung.

[4]. *The Icelandic geographical treatise of the mid-thirteenth century*, AM 764, 4^o (*Antiquités russes d'après les monuments historiques des Islandais et des anciens Scandinaves*. Ed. C.C.Rafn. Copenhagen, 1852, t. 2, p. 443-445):

Svíþjóð Eggir fyrir austan Danmörk, en Noregr fyrir nordan. En austr af Noregi er Ruzaland, ok norðr þaðan Tartararíki. Fyrir nordan Noregh er Finnörk; þaðan vikr landinu til lannorþus, aðr komi til Bjarmalands. Af Bjarmalandi ganga lönd obygd af Norðrætt unz Grænland tekr víð.

[5]. «Gripla», AM 115, 8^o (*Ibidem*, p. 404):

Beicaland er víð Saxland, hia Saxlandi er Hollsetu land, þa Danmörk. J gegnum fellur síor austur vegu. Svíþjóð liggir fyrir austan Danmörk, Noregr fyrir nordan, Finnörk norðr af Noregi. Þa vijkr til landnordus, ok austurs, aðr enn kiemr til Biarma lands, það er skattgillt undir Gardá Ríki. Fra Biarmalandi liggja obygdír. Norður allt til þess er Grænland kallast.

[6a-b]. «Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar» by Oddr Snorrason (*Saga Óláfs Tryggvasonar av Oddr Snorrason munkr*. Udgivet af Finnur Jónsson. København, 1932, s. 83-84).

[6a] — A:

Sa var konungr forðum er Nori het er fyrstr hyggi Noreg. en austr fra Noregi er Danmörk. en Svíþjóð austr fra. En vestr fra er England. En norðr fra Noregi er Finnörk. Noregr er vaxinn með iij oddum. er lengð lanzins or utsuðre i norðr ætt fra Gautelfi oc norðr til Uggcstafs. En breiddin oc uiddin or austri oc iuestr fra Eidascoigi oc til Englanðz síoar. En landit er greint oc callat þessum heitum Vik. Hordaland. Uplond. Prondheimr. Halogaland. Finnörk.

[6b] — S:

Sa var konungr ræð fyrstr Norege er Nóa het. i svðr fra Norege er Danmörk ok austr Svíþjóð en i vestr Englanz haf. oc norþr Finnörk ok er lengz lanzins yr svðri oc i norðr. fra Gautelfe svnan ok norðr til Veggistafs en breiddin or austri ok i vestr fra Eida skoge til Englanz síofar. Vik ok Hórða land Haloga land ok Prandheimr.

[7]. *The so-called «Legendary Saga of St. Olaf» (Olafs saga hins helga. Efter pergamenthaandskrift i Uppsala Universitetsbibliotek, Delagardieske samling nr. 8 II. Utgit av O.A.Johnsen. Kristiania, 1922, s. 27):*

Olafur læggr nu allan noreg undir sic. Oc var hann nu til konongs tækinn i allum norege. Olafur æyðdi allum fylcis konongom i landeno. Oc hafte nu æinn allan noreg undir sic lagðan næst æfir haralld hinn harfagra. fra ægestaf nordan oc allt til ælvar austr.

[8]. «*Hagrskinna*» (*Hagrskinna — Noregs konunga tal. Bjarni Einarsson gaf út. Íslenzk formrit [IF], b. XXIX. Reykjavík, 1985, bl. 173*):

Óláfr konungr enn digri lagði þá undir sik allan Nóregr austan frá Elfi ok norðr til Gandvíkr.

[9]. *Snorri Sturluson. «Heimskringla» (Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson gaf út. ÍF, b. XXVII. Reykjavík, 1945, bl. 79)*:

Þvitum vér böendr, hvert réttast er landaskipti at fornu milli Noregskonungs ok Svía konunga ok Danakonunga, at Gautolfr hefir ráðit frá Væni til sævar, en nordan Markir til Eidaakógs, en þaðan Kilir allt norðr til Finnmarkar — svá ok þat, at ýmsir hafa gengit á annarra lönd.

[10]. *The «Flateyjarbók» version of the «Separate Saga of St. Olaf» (Flateyjarbók: En Samling af norske Konge-Sagaer. Udg. af Guðbrandr Vigfússon & C.R. Unger. Christiania, 1862, b. 2, s. 246)*:

Ham [Óláfr Haraldsson] var einvaldzkonungr yfir Noregi sua vitt sem Haraldr hinn haarfagri hafði aatt frændi hans. roð fyrir nordan Gandvík enn fyrir sunnan Gautolfr enn Eidaakogr fyrir austan. Aungulseyjarsund fyrir vestan.

[11]. «*Egils saga Skallagrimssonar*» (*Sigurður Nordal gaf út. ÍP, b. II. Reykjavík, 1933, bl. 36*):

Finnmörk er stórliga víð; gengr haf fyrir vestan ok þar af firdir stórir, svá ok fyrir nordan ok allt austr un; en fyrir sunnan er Nóregr, ok tekr mörkin nálíga allt ít efra suðr svá sem Hálogaland ít ýtra. En austr frá Naumudal er Janntaland, ok þá Helsingjaland ok þá Kvenland, þá Finnland, þá Kirjálaland; en Finnmörk liggir fyrir ofan þessi öll lönd, ok eru víða fjallbyggðir upp á mörkina, sumt í dali, en sumt með vötnum.

[12]. *Saxo Grammaticus. «Gesta Danorum» (Saxonis Gesta Danorum, ed. J. Olrik & H. Røder. Haunia, 1931, t. I, p. 8–9)*:

8. Et ut paulo altius Norvagiæ descriptio replicetur, sciendum, quod ab ortu Suetiæ Gothiæque contermina aquis utrimqueseucus Oceani vicinantis includitur. Eadem a septentrione regionem ignoti situs ac nominis intueitur, humani cultus expertem, sed monstruosæ novitatis populis abundantem, quam ab adversis Norvagiæ partibus interflua pelagi separavit immensitas. Quod cum incertæ navigationis existat, perpaucis eam ingredientibus salutarem reditum tribuit.

9. Ceterum Oceani superior flexus Daniam intersecando prætermans australem Gothiæ plagam sinu laxiore contingit; inferior vero meatus eius Norvagiæque latus septentrionale præteriens ad ortum versus magno cum latitudinis incremento solido limitatur anfractu. Quem maris terminum gentis nostræ veteres Gandwicum dixerunt. Igitur inter Gandwicum et meridianum pelagus breve continentis spatium patet, maria utrimqueseucus allapsa prospectans; quod nisi rerum natura limitis loco congressis pæne fluctibus obiecisset, Suetiam Norvagiæque conflui fretorum æstus in insulam redegisæent. Harum ortivas partes Scritfinni incolunt...

10. Suetia vero Daniam ab occasu Norvagiæque respiciens a meridie et multa orientis parte vicino præteritur Oceano. Post quam ab ortu quoque multiplex divcratitatis barbaricæ consortio reperitur.

